
The MCA Advisory

The Newsletter of Medal Collectors of America

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CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE EVERY MONTH

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From the Editor

In our August issue, we published a description of the contents of Stacks' pending Americana sale. We cited Vicken Yegparian as the author of the piece, whereas it had been penned by David Alexander. Our apologies to David.

Speaking of authors, let us welcome Skyler Liechty, a newcomer to our pages. His article on Betts 32, see below, is a worthy beginning to what we hope will be a succession of works from his pen. Mr. Liechty's thorough recounting of the history of the time adds immeasurably to one's enjoyment of the medal/jeton itself.

This issue was delayed in order to include an account of Stacks' Americana Sale. Given declines that have occurred in some segments of the numismatic markets, readers will be interested in the relative health of the market for medals. The quality of the material being offered is certain to surface all buyers with the interest and the means.

Our thanks to Dick Johnson for his encompassing answer to a question posed below.

Review of Stacks' Americana Sale

To dispense with our cavils at the outset, this catalogue was not prepared with Stacks' usual care. Three rarities trumpeted in the prospectus for the sale (see our August issue) were not present: Betts 13 and Betts 29 were misattributions and Betts 28 was nowhere to be seen. The piece catalogued as Betts 407 was actually Betts 409. A few of the lot descriptions were careless, the most egregious of which we discuss elsewhere in this issue under "The Montreal Medal."

Cavils aside, the material in the sale was simply glorious. Appropriately, it attracted a good crowd in the room as well as considerable activity from the phones and the

internet. Aided by a well-moneyed book bidder (the former owner?), prices were well above the bargain level.

Some prices were below Ford: e.g. the copper Tuesday club hammered at \$37,500 vs. \$40,000, the Kittanning brought \$75,000 vs. \$90,000, the gold Louisburg \$65,000 vs. \$75,000, and the silver Germantown \$32,500 vs. \$45,000. Other prices were above Ford, notably the large Jefferson peace medal at \$300,000 hammer, a world record for a silver medal by a wide margin. The Betts 35, the Maryland medal, fetched \$110,000, almost double the Ford price but, this specific case, the economics were strongly boosted by Tony Lopez' outstanding article in The Advisory just a few months ago.

The Montreal medal opened and closed at \$100,000. In Ford, it had opened and closed at \$65,000. If the owner truly wants to sell the item, he or she could begin by requesting that the piece be given a candid description.

A Dutch dealer opined that "prices were strong by European standards." No doubt this is a fair statement but, by Ford standards, we would say that prices were "spotty." Granted that some items went higher, a greater number went lower. From our standpoint, we are grateful to Stacks' for laying out such a rich feast and to John Kraljevich for making the catalogue an enduring reference.

The Montreal Medal

(by John W. Adams)

The Montreal Medal can lay claim to being the most desirable of all Indian peace medals. Unlike George II, George III and later pieces, the complete story is known: how 691 Indians accompanied British forces on the march to Montreal; how this number dwindled to 185 after they were denied their prerogative of looting the captured Fort Levis; how the faithful remainder continued on to Montreal and how they were rewarded with medals conceived by Sir William Johnson and executed by Major General Jeffrey Amherst.

To make the awards even more special, each is engraved with the recipient's name and tribe. All other Indian peace medals are nameless and, with precious few exceptions, timeless and place-less.

The Montreal medal in Stacks' just-completed Americana Sale came from Ford XIV just three years earlier. Though it is possible that other examples lie in hiding, this example is the only one in collectors' hands. Given such extreme rarity and given its important historical context, the medal is of the utmost desirability. As such, it deserves a catalogue description worthy of the item.

Michael Hodder described the Montreal medal in Ford XIV and John Kraljevich catalogued its reappearance in the Sale of September 2009. Michael is easily the finest cataloguer of Americana to lace on shoes and, if he elects to remain retired, John will assume that mantle. Both do credible jobs of describing the importance of the piece. However, both fail to face up to the unpleasant likelihood that Songese's name on the reverse was polished off with evil intent. The full name "SONGOSE" was on the piece when Beauchamp published it in 1905. Only faint traces remained 100 years later; indeed John J. Ford, Jr. reported to ye editor in 1998 that he owned an unnamed Montreal medal.

Because the removal of the name caused the medal to lose some portion of its value, one can fairly assume that the removal was done to mask its identity. In our opinion, the medal was "hot" when the dirty deed was done. If forced to play detective, we believe that we could make a logical case as to when, by whom and even how the removal was accomplished.

The medal is "cold" now, so there is no reason to hire a detective and assign blame. However, we do believe it is important to point out to collectors that the magnificent medal in question was once desecrated. It is better, in our opinion, to make this bald statement than to pretend that such things don't happen.

The Spanish Defense of Bahia, Brazil at All Saints Bay in 1631

(by: Skyler Liechty)

There were few Spanish military victories over the Dutch in South America from the late sixteenth through mid-seventeenth century. The most notable of these was defensive in nature; that of Bahia, Brazil at All Saints Bay known as Baia de Todos os Santos in Portuguese, with the Spanish prevailing. Accordingly, few medals were struck commemorating the limited number of Spanish successes. C. Wyllis Betts, in his work *American Colonial History Illustrated by Contemporary Medals* lists merely one medal commemorating the Spanish defeating the Dutch; there are five medals listed by Betts memorializing Dutch victories against Spain. Including the Caribbean, the number of Dutch victory medals swells to sixteen and the Spanish remains at only one.

Betts lists the medal commemorating the defense of Bahia, Brazil at All Saints Bay by Spain and catalogues it as Betts-32, entitled the "VICTORY AT BAY OF ALL SAINTS" medal. The medal is cross referenced in Betts from Gerard Van Loon's work *Histoire Metallique Des XVII Provinces Des Pays-Bas: Volume II*. It is the only medal struck to commemorate the Spanish efforts in South America during this time frame which did not reflect Spanish defeat. This is also the only contemporary Spanish victory medal listed in the 1924 *Medallas Europeas Relativas A America*, by J.T. Medina.

A synopsis of the events surrounding this noteworthy Spanish defensive victory reveals much about the historic relationship between the Dutch, Portuguese and Spanish colonial efforts in South America during this timeframe, and specifically with regard to Brazil.

On April 22, 1500, a thirteen-ship fleet commanded by the Portuguese navigator Pedro Alvares Cabral, anchored off the South

American coast of what is now Brazil near Bahia's coast. A claim for the territory was laid by Cabral, in the name of King Manuel I of Portugal. With little to export besides Brazilian wood, compared to Portugal's other profitable commerce existing with China, India, and Japan, there was initially only limited Portuguese interest in exploiting Brazil. By the 1530's, however, the Brazilian sugarcane industry took off, becoming one of its most profitable exports. The sugar crop would ultimately become the most important product of colonial Brazil from the sixteenth – eighteenth century on.

By the late sixteenth century, the Dutch were intensely engaged in commercial trade with Brazil, the main purchase being sugar. This brought the Dutch into direct competition with Portugal. Portugal had formed a personal Union with the Spanish King Philip II, due to its succession crisis in 1580. It was officially recognized by the Cortes of Tomar, but would ultimately last only 60 years. This personal unification began the Portuguese House of Habsburg, as it was known in Portugal. A principal condition to the Union was the agreement by Philip II of Spain that he would rule Portugal as a kingdom separate from his Spanish Domains. From the onset of the unification, this proved almost impossible. This Spanish-Portuguese personal Union meant that, by default, the Dutch ambitions in Brazil were in competition with Spain as well as Portugal. Accordingly, following the personal Unification of Portugal and Spain, Philip II began to prohibit commerce with Dutch ships, including trading in Brazil.

Under the new Spanish control of the sugar production in Brazil, there were restrictions placed on colonial trade. Specifically, Brazil was only permitted to export and import goods to and from Portugal and other Portuguese colonies. Portugal had established several colonial outposts on the coasts of Brazil and dominated these trade networks for decades. With the Portuguese crown now joined with that of Spain under

Philip II, any attack on Portuguese overseas possessions by the Dutch was viewed as an assault on Spain, forcing Spain to act, and divert their important financial and military resources to resolve any hostilities. This was the beginning of a several decade-long war known as the Dutch-Portuguese War.

With the expiration of the 1621 Treaty of Antwerp between the Dutch and the Spanish, conflict began intensifying in South America and the Caribbean between these two powers. That same year, a Charter creating the Dutch West India Company was granted by the States-General of the Netherlands to Willem Usselincx. Usselincx was a Flemish investor, merchant, and diplomat. Part of the Charter granted the company a 24-year monopoly of navigation and trade. The monopoly extended to the coastlands of America and the West Indies, from the south-end of Newfoundland to the Straits of Magellan, and to the coasts and lands of Africa from the tropic of Cancer to the Cape of Good Hope. Their history demonstrates that in many ways the Dutch West India Company was intended to be more of an instrument of war, with aims of buccaneering rather than simply commerce. To that end, a Dutch strategy was laid out to attack the Spanish and Portuguese. Its most effective approach was to molest the most profitable interests, those in Brazil.

Numerous other factors lead to the decision for the Dutch to exploit their power in Brazil using the vehicle of the Dutch West India Company. A primary factor was the vulnerable condition of the Spanish defenses on the South American coast. It was determined that Bahia's meager defenses made it the most vulnerable of the coastal cities in South America, and the optimum target.

In 1624 Dutch Vice-Admiral Piet Heyn, one of, if not the most notable Dutch Admirals of the time, arrived in the Bay of All Saint's near Bahia. On May 10th, a fleet of five Dutch vessels went to contain an approaching Spanish fleet, and to cover the landing of the Dutch forces lead by Colonel Jan van Dorth, lord of

Horst. What was initially meant to be a simple suppression soon became a full-fledged attack and rout by the Dutch, resulting in either the capturing or burning of all the Spanish ships in the fleet by Heyn's forces. The Dutch troops who landed at Bahia were without opposition, and proceeded to occupy a convent on the heights opposite the town. Hein's victory caused an all out panic to seize the garrison. That night the soldiers and inhabitants of Bahia vacated the town - leaving only the Governor and his son, who had refused to leave their posts in the city. The next morning the Dutch marched into the undefended town, and occupied it. The Dutch occupation of Bahia lasted less than a year; it was ultimately retaken by the Spanish.

Late in 1630, word of a possible Dutch attack planned against Olinda, on the coast of Pernambuco, Brazil, was received by the Spanish. Matthias de Albuquerque was sent by the King of Spain to protect any threat to Olinda and its village port of Recife. At the entrance of the town there were two forts, San Francisco and San Jorge, both strongly garrisoned and armed. Despite these defenses, Jonckheer Diederik van Waerdenburgh, Commander of the Dutch military forces, and Hendrik Cornelisz Lonck, Admiral-in-Chief of the Dutch fleet, attacked and captured Olinda later in 1630. The capture of Olinda finally gave the Dutch access to the highly lucrative Portuguese sugarcane plantations and threatened important Spanish financial interests in the region.

The Spanish initially responded by creating a military blockade of the Dutch forces in Recife, preventing the supply of necessary provisions to the port, hoping to eventually starve the Dutch occupation into surrender. On May 5, 1631, under the command of Admiral Antonio de Oquendo, a powerful joint fleet of fifteen Spanish and five Portuguese warships set sail from Lisbon to Pernambuco. Their main intention was to serve as reinforcements for Matthias de Albuquerque. They first arrived in Bahia, which was originally intended to be a

brief stop. The fleet sat there idle for weeks, delaying their intended trip to retake Pernambuco. Admiral Adriaan Pater, Commander of the Dutch West Indies fleet near Pernambuco, was informed by his scouts of Admiral Oquendo's arrival at Bahia and his intended target of Pernambuco. In what proved to be an ill-conceived move, Admiral Pater decided to take his fleet, and engage the superior forces of the Spanish flotilla at All Saints Bay, which is positioned nearly 500 miles Southwest of Olinda.

The Dutch fleet was comprised of sixteen ships and yachts. The opposing Spanish flotilla defending All Saints Bay consisted of a much larger force of twenty Spanish galleons and sixteen Spanish caravels. Admiral Pater's initial strategy for the sea battle was to separate the Dutch fleet into two lines, attacking the Spanish fleet in two sections. One line was led by Pater's ship, Prins Willem; the second line by Vice-Admiral Thijssen aboard the Vereenigte Provintien. When they first sighted the vastly overpowering Spanish fleet, most of the other Dutch ship captains decided not to participate in the offensive. Thus, the Dutch force that engaged the Spanish consisted only of the Prins Willem, Vereenigte Provintien, and two other ships. Prins Willem, and one other Dutch ship pulled alongside Oquendo's St. Jago. Vereenigte Provintien and the remaining Dutch ship engaged the St Antonio de Padua, captained by Spanish Vice-Admiral Francisco de Vallecilla. After a pitched seven hours battle, the Spanish galleon St. Jago was nearly destroyed. A Dutch victory seemed inevitable, but then an unexpected fire broke out on board the Prins Willem reversing her fortunes. With a sinking ship, Admiral Pater, unwilling to surrender, wrapped his body in the flag and plunged into the sea. On the other line of battle Vice-Admiral Thijssen had more favorable results - he sank the St Antonio de Padua and another galleon, and captured a third.

With the sinking of the Prins Willem, the Battle of All Saints Bay was a defensive

victory for the Spanish, celebrated by the Betts-32 medal. The damage to the size and power of the Spanish fleet, however, caused Admiral Oquendo to cancel his primary objective to continue on to Pernambuco to recapture Olinda from the Dutch, resulting in the expansion of Dutch power in Brazil. In the end, the Spanish success at All Saints Bay resulted in “winning the battle but losing the war.”

The *Victory at Bay of All Saints* medal is one of my personal favorite colonial medals from this era, first and foremost because of its status as only Betts medal struck to commemorate any Spanish victories during this historic period. The obverse of this medal features a bust of King Philip IV of Spain. The legend **PHILIP . IIII . HISP . INDIA . REX . CATHOLICVS** (Philip IV, Catholic King of Spain and the Indies). In exergue the date in roman numerals translates to the date of 1631. Philip IV became King of Spain and sovereign of the Spanish Netherlands at the age of 16 and ruled between 1621 and 1665. He was known as Philip III the King of Portugal and ruled Portugal until 1640. In 1640 he was expelled from the Portuguese throne by John IV who gave it to the Braganza's, which would be the ruling dynasty of Portugal from 1640 until 1853. Under King Philip IV the Spanish empire reached its historical peak spanning an estimated three billion acres. Philip IV was one of the last rulers during the Spanish Golden Age and last King of the Portuguese House of Habsburg.

The reverse design depicts of Samson wrestling a lion. The allegorical interpretation given at the UK National Maritime Museum online is “Here Samson takes the honey of Brazil from the jaws of the Dutch lion”. The narrative of Samson and the lion is found in the Bible in the Book of Judges chapters 13 through 16. The legend **DVLCIA . SIC . MERVIT** according to Betts is translated “Thus he deserved joys”, although I believe a more accurate translation would be “Thus he won sweetness”. This translation would also be a better fit given the importance of the sugar

industry in Brazil at that time. The date 1631 appears on a stone on the bottom. Interestingly, the medal was struck also struck as a jeton, the main difference being is that the medal has what appears to be the Antwerp mintmark, which is a hand seen at the top of the reverse; also the lettering size is larger on the jeton. The jeton is referenced in the same work by Van Loon as is the medal. In 1631 when the medals and jetons were presumably struck, Antwerp was part of the Spanish Netherlands. The Spanish Netherlands were comprised of the southern part of the Low Countries, which are the countries on low-lying land around the delta of the Scheldt, Rhine, and Meuse rivers, controlled by Spain from 1579–1713. The area became known as the Spanish Netherlands in 1581 after the northern portion of the Netherlands separated from Spanish rule and became the United Provinces, leaving the southern portion under Spanish jurisdiction.

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About The Author

Skyler Liechty, a native Texan and commercial real estate entrepreneur, has been involved in numismatics for many years. Early American coins and medals is where his journey into numismatics began. It was not until the Stacks auction of the John J. Ford, Jr. collection in January 2006 that his attention turned exclusively towards historical medals. His passion for historical medals is complimented perfectly by his love of history. Currently he is working on the Betts series, attempting to form a collection encompassing the entire series. In 2007 he was awarded Best Overall Signature Set by Numismatic Guaranty Corporation for his set American Colonial Historical Medals. He is a member of the American Numismatic Association, Colonial Coin Collectors Club, and Medal Collectors of America.



Letters to the Editor

Inquiry about City of New York Michael Lantz Medallion

Dear Mr. Adams,

I have a medallion that was given to me around 1968 by John V. Lindsay, Mayor of New York City. I have attached photographs of the obverse and reverse. It appears to be bronze and is about 2.75 inches in diameter. It shows "Michael Lantz" at the 4 o'clock position on the obverse. On the edge, etched in capital letters, is "MEDALLIC ART CO NY"

Can you tell me something about this medallion?

David Asch

Good morning, Dick,
Can you help Mr. Asch out?

Thanks,

John Adams

Mr. Asche:

Consider yourself fortunate. This is a very attractive and desirable medal. It was indeed struck by **Medallic Art Company** in 1948--then of New York City, now of Dayton, Nevada -- and created by sculptor **Michael Lantz** (1908-1988).

The medal had a dual purpose. It was created as an anniversary medal of the City of New York, but shortly after was also adapted as an award medal. It was bestowed as a municipal award for the period 1948 thru 1962.

The obverse female is a stunning symbol of New York City. The five stars below are symbolic of the city's five boroughs.

On the reverse the center panel, called a **reserve**, is where lettering was to be placed, obviously the recipients name and date, with enough room for a citation of his or her award

achievements. The round circle is a companion of the circular panel on the obverse, a design device called *repetition*, an example of excellent medallic design employed by seasoned medallists.

The figures surrounding the center panel are magnificent. The top is a symbol of Lee Lawrie's *Atlas* at Rockefeller Center; the buildings include a New York skyline, and factory buildings belching smoke. Smoke was once the symbol of prosperity before it became politically correct to eliminate the smoke. Sheesh!

All-in-all an exceptional design and well modeled by the artist. It is textbook example of fine art using high relief appropriately in medal art. It is cataloged in Medallic Art Company records as MACo **48-12**. It exists in two varieties.

The artist's use of high relief in his medals was even more profound in his *Edgar Allan Poe* on a medal in the series of the Hall of Fame for Great Americans at New York University [now Bronx Community College]. That medal is considered the *epitome* of high relief in all American art medals.

(Perhaps we could encourage you to become an art medal collector now. You have a forerunner of a collection in your New York City Medal, and perhaps you could add a second with that Edgar Allan Poe specimen! No one collects just one medal, with two you are on your way to becoming a full fledged medal collector.)

While your New York City medal was sculptor Lantz's first art medal, he went on to create 26 more medals. He was often commissioned to do medals in series, including the most prestigious of all, The Society of Medalists -- he did their 37th Issue--plus an American Bicentennial medal, produced by the United States Mint, two more for Franklin Mint's National Commemorative Society, and one in their International Fraternal Commemorative Society.

His *Ecology* Medal for Brookgreen Gardens is particularly notable. Also he pushed

the medallic envelope in creating one of the first American multiple-part medals, the *Four Freedoms Medal*, in this case a two-part medal.

He holds the distinction of being the first American medallist outside the U.S. Mint to have exhibited at the International Federation de la Medallie (FIDEM). His medallic work was displayed in seven of these international exhibitions (1955-1983). Your New York City Medal was on exhibit at two of these: Stockholm (1955) and Paris (1957).

He was the brother of artist Walter Lantz, creator of *Woody Woodpecker*. A decade older than Michael, Walter was so successful with this cartoon character he was able to fund his younger brother through art school. However, Michael always existed in his brother's shadow, and despite his overwhelming success as a medallist, **it never quite reach the same level as his older brother's fame.**

His medallic fame includes receiving the J. Sanford Saltus Medal from the American Numismatic Society in 1968, and the Lindsey Morris Prize for the best Bas-Relief (including medals) from the National Sculpture Society, 1950, where he was a fellow member.

He was a jolly good fellow with wide contacts in society and the art field. I knew him personally and remember once a pleasant auto trip together where I drove him home from a New York City function, stopping off at a camera shop to pick up a repaired camera. The Great Artist used photography in his medallic work.

May we have your permission to publish your inquiry and this reply in our collector newsletter?

Dick Johnson

Hi John (and John) --

In recataloging a San Francisco Mechanics' Institute medal in our collection, I happened upon this reference to a West Virginia project (1984). I wonder how far

they've come in locating heirs of these West Virginia Union soldiers to be able to award these medals!

http://www.wvculture.org/History/journal_wvh/wvh45-12.html

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John,

I think you will be pleased to know that your "plastic" prodding managed to trickle down, and has influenced one more person to bring their appreciation of the multi-sensory beauty of medal collecting to the next level.

Best,

Tony Lopez



John,

I must repeat how much I am still very actively feasting on your superb medals book.

Since it was published, have you learned anything more about replacement Reverse dies for the Franklin medals known as Betts 619 and 620?

Many thanks for sharing what you can about this when time permits. Hope all is going well with your work on Vernon.

Cordially,

Bill Michal

Hi John,

Mike Maisen asked me if this note (below) could be posted on the MCA Advisory. Could you please publish it?

Thanks.

Ben Weiss

Hi Ben,

I'm a copywriter at Northwest Territorial Mint and we're very excited to be releasing an eye-catching large calendar medallion for the 100th Anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America. To support the upcoming promotion of this release, I'm researching the history of calendar medals.

I've used MCA's site in the past and have found it very helpful and am hoping you can help in my research. I would like to know if you can suggest resources or articles that would help illustrate the appeal and collector interest in these unique types of medals.

Any help or suggestions would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mike

Mike Maisen Copywriter
Northwest Territorial Mint
Email : mikem@nwtmint.com

LA medal

Dear John,

You forgot one very important part of the Libertas Americana medal that I bought for \$625 in 1971 (I think) the only LA I've owned. I panicked when I couldn't get \$95 for a UNC copper bronze one as I had 4 of them in stock at the time.

Best Regards,

Hank Spangenberger

P.S. Thanks for all the publicity you've given me

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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QUESTIONNAIRE

How did you learn about the MCA?

What are your collecting interests?

What would you see highlighted in MCA publications?

For volunteers: I am willing to devote time to the following MCA projects:

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Please send completed application and payment to:

Medal Collectors of America
c/o Barry Tayman
3115 Nestling Pine Court
Ellicott City, MD 21042

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MCA WEBSITE: <http://www.medalcollectors.org>